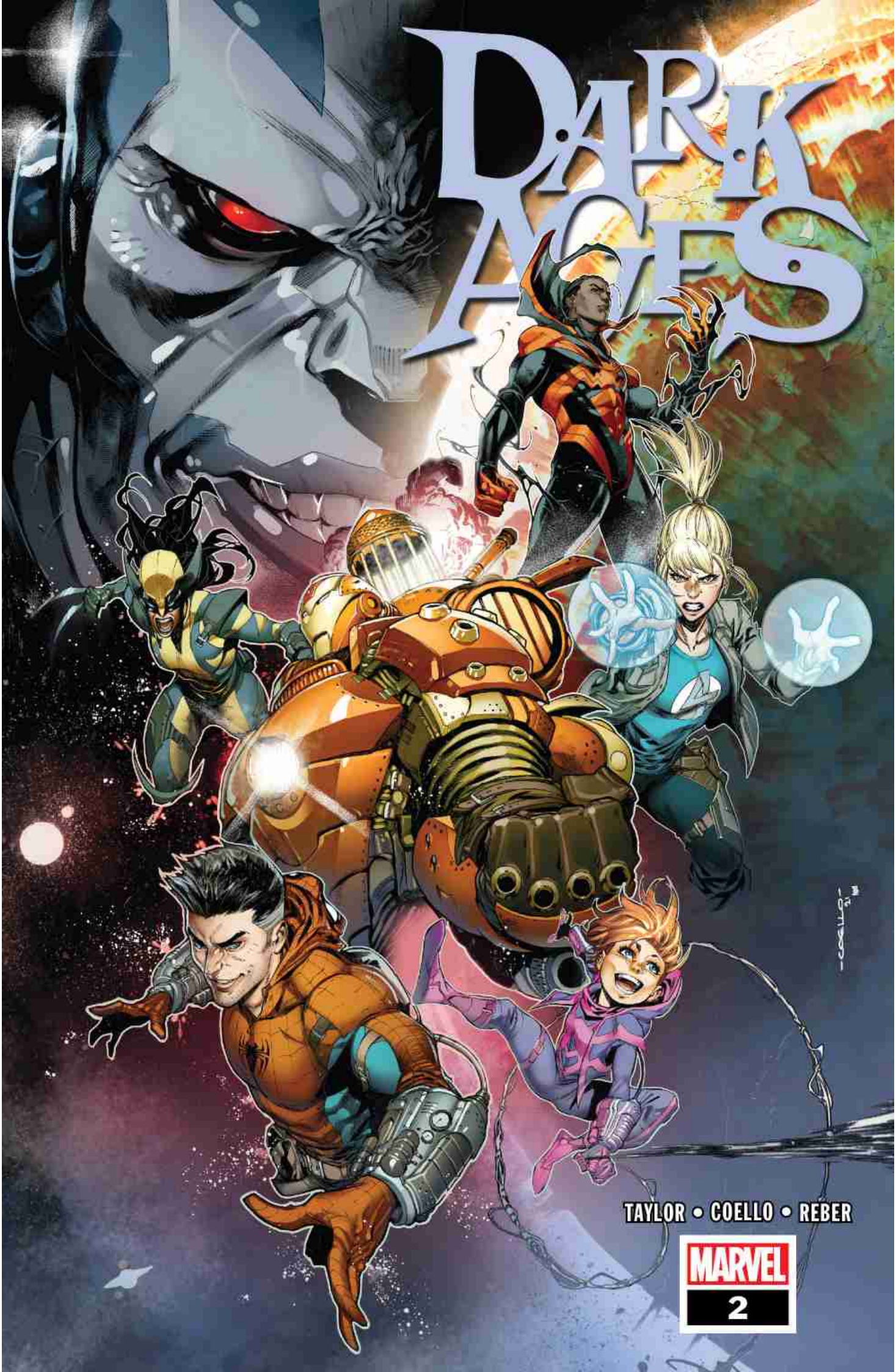
DARK AGES
TAYLOR • COELLO • REBER
MARVEL
2

A being of immense power called the Unmaker was sealed away inside the Earth. Billions of year later, the Unmaker awakened and began to destroy the planet from within, causing massive destruction. Earth's heroes sent a small strike force to combat the threat. Dr. Strange released an E.M.P. wave that halted the Unmaker. However, with Strange now dead, the portal remained open and the E.M.P. wave encompassed the entire planet, wiping out all electricity.

Now, seven years later, the survivors have formed a new society without the use of electricity. But other, darker forces are also at work...

DARK AGES

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special thanks to PAUL JENKINS

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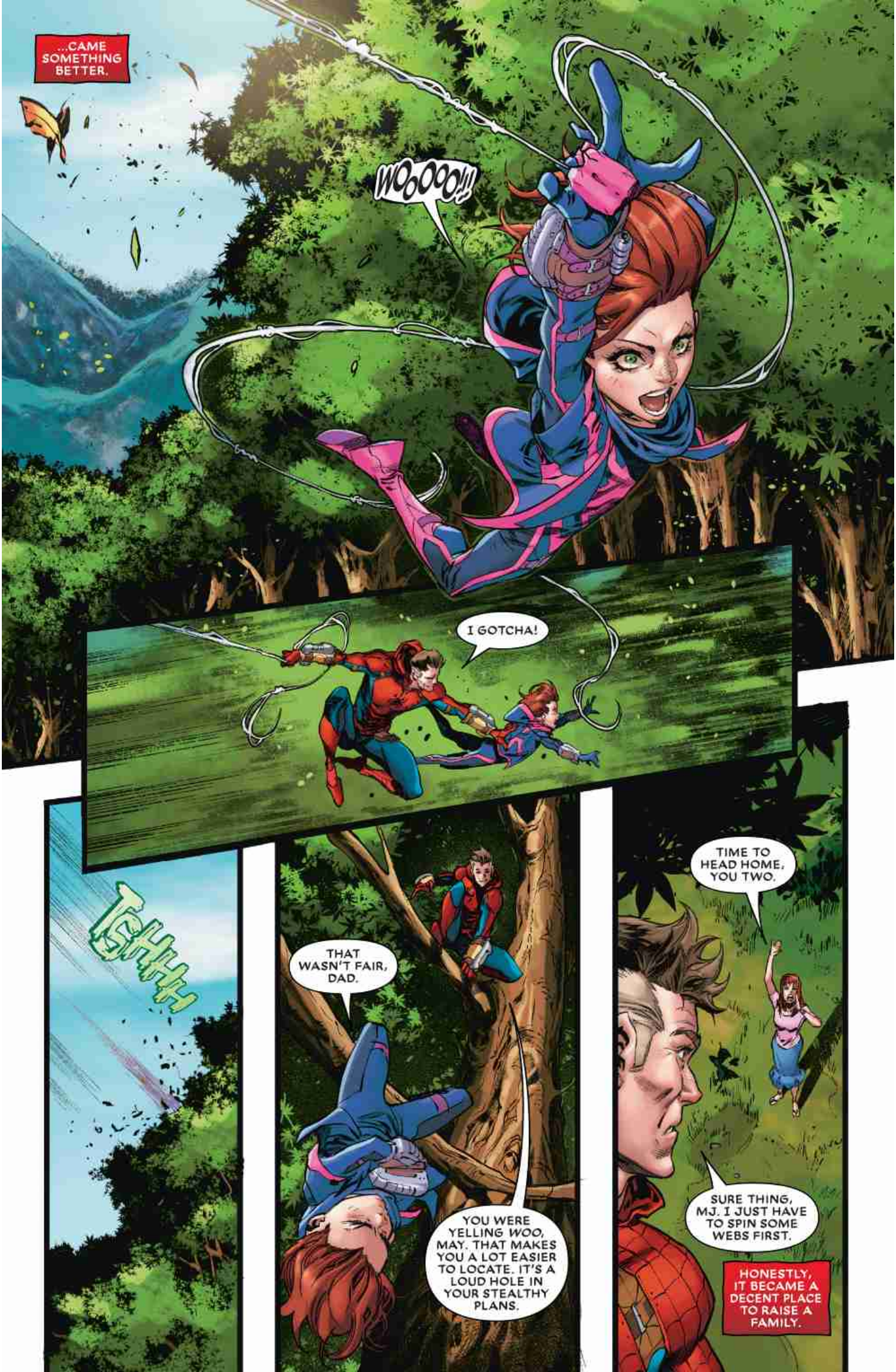
AFTER OUR WORLD WENT DARK, PEOPLE WERE SCARED AND GRIEVING, AND THEIR FEAR AND HURT TURNED INTO *ANGER*.
THERE WERE WARS FOUGHT OVER BORDERS, RESOURCES, IDEOLOGIES.
IT WAS *CHAOS*.
BETWEEN THE INITIAL EARTHQUAKES, THE LOSS OF POWER AND THE WARS, BILLIONS OF LIVES WERE LOST.

THERE'S ANOTHER WAY!
THERE'S ANOTHER WAY.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. THERE'S A BETTER WAY, SON.
WE CAN FIND IT, TOGETHER.
WHO SAYS A POSTAPOCALYPTIC WORLD HAS TO BE A BAD PLACE?
FORGET YOUR BARREN WASTELANDS, YOUR FASHION DOMINATED BY LEATHER AND SKULLS AND THE ALL-TOO-COMMON PROBLEM OF ROVING CANNIBALS. AFTER THE FALL OF OUR CIVILIZATION...

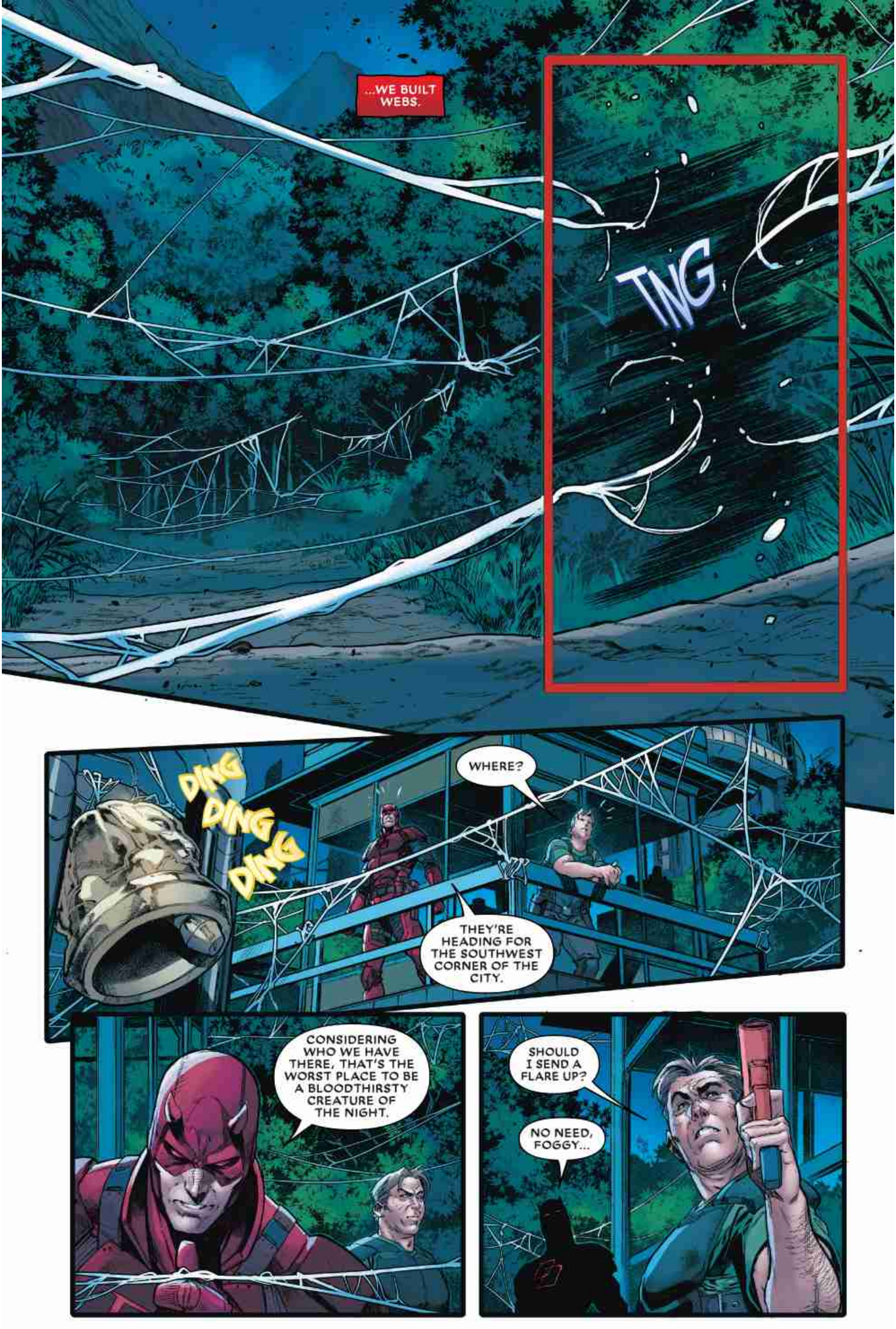

...CAME SOMETHING BETTER.
WOOOO!!!
I GOTCHA!
TSHH
THAT WASN'T FAIR, DAD.
YOU WERE YELLING *WOO*, MAY. THAT MAKES YOU A LOT EASIER TO LOCATE. IT'S A LOUD HOLE IN YOUR STEALTHY PLANS.
TIME TO HEAD HOME, YOU TWO.
SURE THING, MJ. I JUST HAVE TO SPIN SOME WEBS FIRST.
HONESTLY, IT BECAME A DECENT PLACE TO RAISE A FAMILY.

WITH A SMALLER POPULATION WITHOUT ELECTRICITY, INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MASS PRODUCTION, THE WORLD STARTED COMING BACK FROM THE BRINK OF CLIMATE DESTRUCTION.
PEOPLE FLED THE MOST INHOSPITABLE PLACES AND CAME TO THRIVING CENTERS.
WHAT WAS LEFT OF HUMANITY SHELTERED FROM THE DARKNESS TOGETHER.
THESE SUPERCITIES WERE EACH LINKED BY A POWERFUL TELEPATH.
BRAZIL CHECKING IN.

AUSTRALIA CHECKING IN.

NEPAL CHECKING IN.
SO, WHILE THE WORLD WAS DIVIDED BY DISTANCE, IT WAS ALSO CONNECTED BY PEOPLE WHO OPENED THEIR MINDS AND HID NOTHING FROM EACH OTHER. ALL WITH A COMMON GOAL.

THE CENTER OF OUR NEW WORLD, EARTH'S CAPITAL, WAS WAKANDA.
WAKANDA CHECKING IN.
A COUNCIL OF GREAT THEORISTS INNOVATED EVERY DAY IN THE CITY.
SOME OF THE BEST MINDS LINKED TOGETHER BY JEAN GREY.
ARE WE READY?
LUNELLA LAFAYETTE, SHURI, TONY STARK, VALERIA RICHARDS, T'CHALLA, NADIA VAN DYNE, AMADEUS CHO AND VICTOR VON DOOM JOINED THE GREATEST OF NON-POWERED THINKERS.
THEY REIMAGINED WHAT THE WORLD COULD BE.
THEY DREAMED UP LIGHTING AND REFRIGERATION, WHOLE NEW SYSTEMS OF FOOD PRODUCTION AND PRESERVATION, SHELTER AND GOVERNANCE. TOGETHER, THEY CREATED A POSTAPOCALYPTIC UTOPIA.
ONE HUNDRED HOURS OF CHEMILUMINESCENCE FROM A SINGLE ACTIVATION.
HOW DID WE PROTECT OUR UTOPIA...?


...WE BUILT WEBS.
TING
DING DING DING
WHERE?
THEY'RE HEADING FOR THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE CITY.
CONSIDERING WHO WE HAVE THERE, THAT'S THE WORST PLACE TO BE A BLOODTHIRSTY CREATURE OF THE NIGHT.
SHOULD I SEND A FLARE UP?
NO NEED, FOGGY...

"...WOLVERINE WILL KNOW BY NOW."
WHAT IS IT?
WEREWOLVES.
SNIKT
SNIKT
WITH DELICATE BUT FRAGRANT UNDERTONES OF VAMPIRE.
COATING WITH SILVER.
SHNK
TSSSS
READY FOR VAMPIRES, GABBY?
STAKE FISTS ARE GO!
BLADE?
LET'S HUNT.
OF COURSE, WITH THE LIGHTS GOING OUT ACROSS THE WORLD...

...DARKNESS THRIVED.
THE NIGHT HORDE RAIDS WERE FREQUENT, BUT WE HAD PROTECTORS WHO WERE FAR MORE FEARSOME THAN ANY MONSTERS.
RARGHHH!!!

RARGHHHHH!!!
RAARGHHH!!!
AH, THE SERENE SOUNDS OF THE FOREST AT NIGHT.
SOUNDS LIKE A NIGHT HORDE MAKING A VERY BAD MISTAKE, PEPPER.
HSSSS
STARK.

SHNK
YOU'D THINK A BRILLIANT INVENTOR WOULD INVENT A DOOR.
CAP!
SORRY ABOUT THE VAMPIRE BITS.
HEY. IT HAPPENS.
STEVE! IT'S BEEN FAR TOO LONG. WE WERE GETTING WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, PEPPER.

HOW GOES ALCHEMY?
TURNED SOME LEAD INTO GOLD. YOU WANT SOME?
WHAT FOR?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW. THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN WORTH A LOT OF MONEY BACK WHEN MONEY WAS A THING.

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO SEE YOU SO... CONTENT.
I'D SAY A LESS EXCITING LIFE SUITS US BOTH.

WE'RE STANDING IN DEAD VAMPIRE.
I SAID LESS EXCITING, NOT DULL.

I'VE BEEN IN EUROPE.
HOW IS IT?
STILL RULED BY AN IRON FIST.

THEY NEED HELP, TONY.
CAN WE TAKE A WALK?

I THOUGHT YOU'D MISS ELECTRICITY MORE. I THOUGHT YOU'D FEEL HELD BACK.
HONESTLY...?
I DO. I LIE AWAKE AT NIGHT CREATING THINGS IN MY MIND.
MACHINES THAT COULD TRANSFORM THE WORLD THAT WILL NEVER BE SWITCHED ON.
WATCH OUT FOR THE WEBS.
ARE YOU HERE TO ASK ME TO GO TO WAR WITH EUROPE?
NO. I THINK THERE'S ANOTHER SOLUTION.
WHAT IF I TOLD YOU THERE MIGHT BE A WAY TO SWITCH ON ALL THE MACHINES RUNNING IN YOUR MIND?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO SHOW YOU.

HELLO, IRON MAN.
APOCALYPSE!

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOO GOOD AT KILLING, STARK.
SOME OF THE VAMPIRES YOU JUST INCINERATED HAVE BEEN IN MY SERVICE FOR CENTURIES.
HRK.
CAP! GET...HNNNG... DRACULA OFF ME, AND I'LL--
NO.
CNK

YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN TOO GOOD AT KILLING, STARK.
SOME OF THE VAMPIRES YOU JUST INCINERATED HAVE BEEN IN MY SERVICE FOR CENTURIES.
HRK.
CAP! GET...HNNNG... DRACULA OFF ME, AND I'LL--
NO.
CNK

EXTRACTION ACCOMPLISHED.

WELL DONE, MYSTIQUE.
WE WERE SO RESILIENT. WE HAD SURVIVED SO WELL.

WE COULDN'T SEE THE DANGER GROWING...

...IN EUROPE.
WAKE, STARK.
HUH?
YOUR MIND IS BEYOND HUMAN, STARK. I THOUGHT MUTANTS WERE THE ONLY SPECIES WORTH PRESERVING.
BUT I SEE NOW I THOUGHT TOO NARROWLY.
GOOD FOR YOU. IT'S NICE THAT DESPOTIC, GENOCIDAL MANIACS CAN GROW.
YOU SHALL WORK FOR ME.
SORRY. I'VE ALWAYS HAD A FIRM RULE ABOUT NOT WORKING FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE SLAVES BUILD THEM STATUES.
AND WERE YOUR IRON MAN SUITS NOT PARTLY SHINING TRIBUTES TO YOURSELF?
WERE THE METALS NOT MINED BY SLAVES IN OTHER LANDS?
YOU UNDERSTAND AS I DO, STARK. EVOLUTION USES AND KILLS THE INFERIOR AND UNDESERVING.
THERE CAN BE NO PROGRESS WITH OUR WORLD RENDERED STAGNANT...

...IT IS TIME TO EVOLVE AGAIN.
RIRI? REED? WE THOUGHT YOU WERE *DEAD*. WE GAVE UP SEARCHING.
SUE THOUGHT--
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP EN SABAH NUR.
ARE YOU BEING THREATENED OR...?
NO. WE ARE BEING GIVEN A CHANCE.

THE POWER RUNNING IN HERE. HOW HAVE YOU DONE THIS?
HOW WOULD *YOU* DO IT?
IT'S A FARADAY CAGE. IMMUNE TO THE CONSTANT E.M.P. BUT EVERY CAGE I'VE TRIED TO BUILD HAS FAILED.
I'VE USED ADAMANTIUM. VIBRANIUM. THE ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE IN THE EARTH IS STILL TOO STRONG.
YOU'D NEED A MAGNETIC... SOMETHING EQUALLY AS STRONG TO REPEL IT IN HERE.
SOME *'THING'*?
NO. SOME*ONE*.
ERIK LEHNSHERR.
YOU'RE USING *MAGNETO*.
WE KNEW APOCALYPSE WAS DANGEROUS.
WELL DONE.
KILLGRAVE.
KILLGRAVE?

THE DICTATOR CONTROLLED WHAT WAS LEFT OF A CONTINENT.
THE PURPLE MAN.
TAKE HIS MIND.
SURE.
BUT WE HAD NO IDEA THE EXTENT OF THE THREAT HE POSED.
I TOUCHED THE MIND OF A BEING MORE POWERFUL THAN A GOD.
THEN, THE EARTH STOPPED AND THE BEING SLEPT.
I WANT THAT POWER.
YOU'RE GOING TO HELP ME WAKE THE UNMAKER, TONY STARK.
WE DIDN'T KNOW HE'D SACRIFICE THE WORLD.
To Be Continued!

HERE'S A LOOK AT IBAN COELLO'S DESIGNS FOR

DARK AGES

CAPTAIN AMERICA

NEXT

The Earth has been plunged into darkness, and Avengers and X-Men have begun vanishing in the night. They have been taken and twisted by Apocalypse to serve an evil older than the world. A group of heroes will assemble to cross the dark planet in a desperate attempt to rescue their friends and save a civilization already on its knees.

ZONE